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Author(s): Jerrold S. Cooper and Wolfgang Heimpel

Source: *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Jan. - Mar., 1983, Vol. 103, No. 1, Studies in Literature from the Ancient Near East, by Members of the American Oriental Society, Dedicated to Samuel Noah Kramer (Jan. - Mar., 1983), pp. 67-82

Published by: American Oriental Society

Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/601860>

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THE SUMERIAN SARGON LEGEND

JERROLD S. COOPER

THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY

WOLFGANG HEIMPEL

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

COLLABORATION IN THE PUBLICATION OF TEXTS AMONG ASSYRIOLOGISTS IS RARE. S. N. Kramer's solicitation of comments from colleagues and publication of these comments and criticisms alongside his own work are exceptional acts, especially among the senior generation of Assyriologists. One recalls the appendix of Landsberger to *Schooldays*, the remarks of Jacobsen at the end of *Gilgamesh and Agga*, and Jacobsen's lengthy contribution to the monumental dissertation of Kramer's student Edmund Gordon, *Sumerian Proverbs*. This was preceded by Kramer's own unique experiment with Sumerian proverbs: In 1952, he presented forty-eight proverbs and their translations to the third Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale. Because of the difficulties proverbs present, he had circulated his transliterations in advance among twenty colleagues, soliciting their translations and comments, and his translations reflected the contributions of the eight colleagues who responded. And many of us recall being present at scholarly meetings where Prof. Kramer would present some unusual text he had recently discovered, freely admitting that there was much he didn't understand, and offering to send his copy and transliteration to all interested (and qualified: "only the cuneiformists among you") parties.

The present collaboration originated when Cooper and Heimpel discovered that they both had worked on the unpublished Sargon-Urababab tablet 3N T296. Cooper had learned about it from M. Civil and Å. Sjöberg when he was preparing an edition of the *Curse of Agade*¹ and he studied it from the casts in the University Museum, discussing it with both Civil and Sjöberg. Heimpel had copied the original during a stay in Baghdad. Civil, who has the publication rights to the tablet, had already completed his own

edition of the text, but nevertheless agreed to let Cooper and Heimpel publish the text here, since other commitments have delayed the revision of his manuscript for publication. He kindly made his transliteration, translation and copy available, as well as a lexical note on *gú-ne-sag-gá*. The present article was hammered out in discussions and correspondence between Cooper and Heimpel, utilizing Civil's material. Where there is irreconcilable disagreement between the two authors, both opinions have been included. In anticipation of Civil's more comprehensive publication, the present study has been kept brief.

THE TEXT. The existence of a Sumerian literary account of Sargon's rise has been known since the publication by Scheil in *RA* 13 of a fragment from Uruk, subsequently republished as *TRS* 73 (AO 7673; see pl. 1), and studied by Güterbock, *ZA* 42, 37f. This fragment is the lower left hand corner of a two column (per side) tablet, containing the end of the first column and the beginning of the fourth column of the composition. The one-column tablet 3N T296 does not overlap *TRS* 73, but rather seems to be a nearly immediate continuation of *TRS* 73 i, as *TRS* 73 iv seems to pick up very close to where 3N T296 ends. The story, or this portion of it, then, is nearly complete, and a hypothetical four-column edition of the text can be reconstructed as follows:

i = <i>TRS</i> 73 obv.	ii = 3N T296 obv.
iii = 3N T296 rev.	iv = <i>TRS</i> 73 rev.

Only the first and last 15 or so lines, and perhaps some transitional lines between cols. i and ii, and iii and iv, are missing.

THE STORY. The composition opens with a description of a prosperous Kish ruled by Urzaba. But the gods have decreed an end to the rule of Kish, and their new favorite, Sargon, is introduced. The bulk of

¹ To be published in Spring, 1983, by the Johns Hopkins Press.

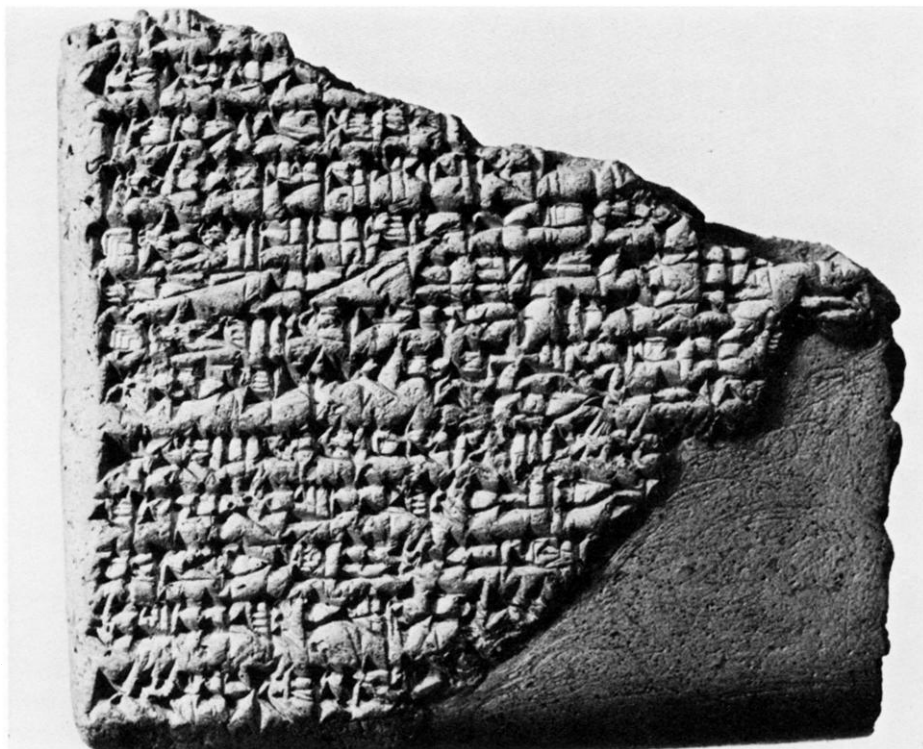


Plate 1a. AO 7673 obverse.

the composition, contained on 3N T296, relates the events foreshadowing Sargon's displacement of Urzababa, and possible efforts by Urzababa to forestall the inevitable. The episode involving the Esikil and the chief smith is particularly obscure, but if some kind of trap for Sargon was being laid, it was certainly not successful. When Sargon reappears in Urzababa's palace, the king is horrified and writes a message about Sargon to Lugalzagesi, presumably another trap for Sargon. But we are told at tablet's end that this will backfire and lead to the death of Urzababa himself.

In *TRS* 73 iv, Lugalzagesi is questioning a messenger, presumably Urzababa's from Kish, about Sargon's refusal to submit to Lugalzagesi. If the composition ends with that column, there is scarcely room enough to give the messenger's response and then very summarily to relate events back in Kish and Sargon's triumph. If, however, this tablet is only the first half of the composition, the second tablet would recount

the foretold death of Urzababa, the succession of Sargon and the battle in which Sargon finally defeated Lugalzagesi and established his hegemony over all of Babylonia.

The composition is full of grammatical and syntactic peculiarities that suggest a later Old Babylonian origin. This is also supported by the frequent quotations from and allusions to other Sumerian literary texts, and the fact that only one exemplar has turned up from Nippur. But, this may just be a degenerate version of a text composed in the Ur III period; only the future discovery of more literary texts from that period and from other sites will enable us to know for certain.

HISTORY AND THE HISTORICAL TRADITION. The inscriptions of Sargon tell us nothing of his career before he became King of Agade. The various traditions about Sargon preserved in Sumerian and Akkadian literary, historiographic and omen literature

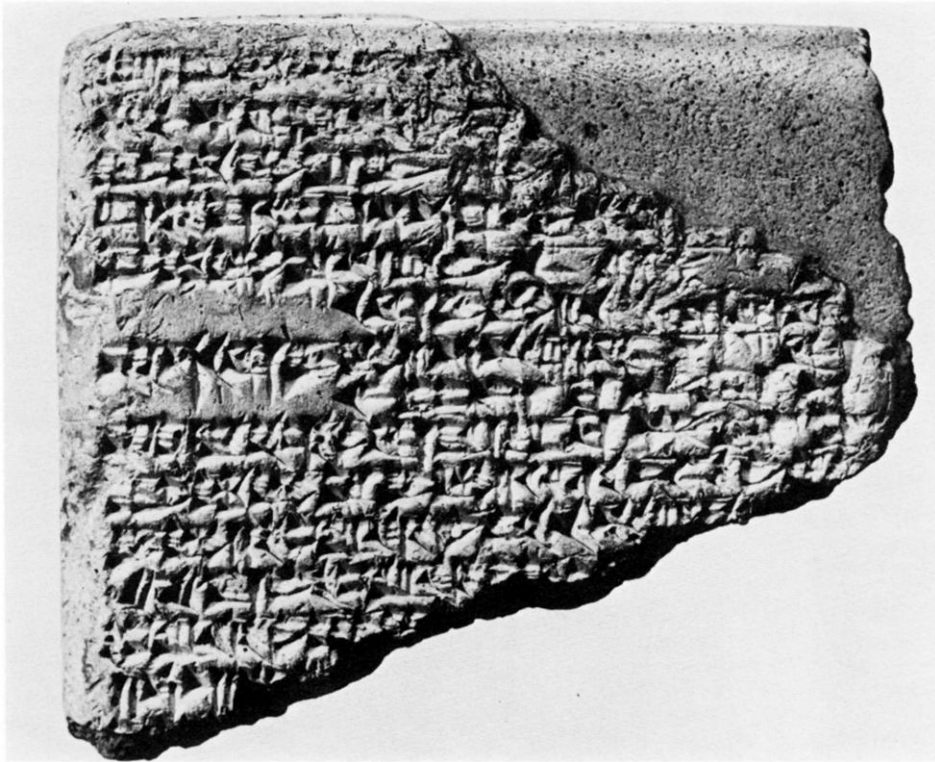


Plate 1b. AO 7673 reverse.

have been recently collected and discussed by Brian Lewis.² Our composition agrees with the Sumerian King List³ and the Weidner Chronicle that Sargon began his career as an official of Urzababa, the King of Kish. Whether it agrees with any other traditions of Sargon's early life cannot be said because of the break in *TRS* 73, but that tablet gives the name of his father, La²ibum, and so contradicts the birth legend's account of his paternity.⁴

Urzababa is known only from historical-literary texts. These and the Sumerian King List agree that he was Sargon's superior, whom Sargon replaced as sovereign of northern Babylonia, and thus was a contem-

porary of Lugalzagesi. This last is well known from his own inscriptions,⁵ an inscription of Uru²inimgina of Lagash,⁶ inscriptions of Sargon,⁷ and contemporary administrative documents.⁸ The son of a ruler of Umma, Lugalzagesi became king of Uruk and suzerain over Sumer. By defeating Lugalzagesi, Sargon, already in control of the north, gained hegemony over all Babylonia. Thus, unlike the *Curse of Agade*, which flagrantly contradicts much of what we know from contemporary sources, the composition presented here is faithful to the outlines of history. But, by their very nature, the details of the composition suggest that they are invented, and the composition must be classed

² *The Sargon Legend*, Chaps. 3–4. [See also J. Westenholz's article, below, *Ed.*]

³ See the contribution of P. Michalowski in this volume.

⁴ Lewis, *op.cit.* 42ff., quoted here in the comm. to *TRS* 73 obv. 10f.

⁵ See Cooper, *Sumerian and Akkadian Royal Inscriptions*, I (forthcoming), Um 7.

⁶ *Ibid.* La 9.5.

⁷ Hirsch, *AfO* 20 Sargon b 1, 6, 7.

⁸ Powell, *HUCA* 40 1ff.

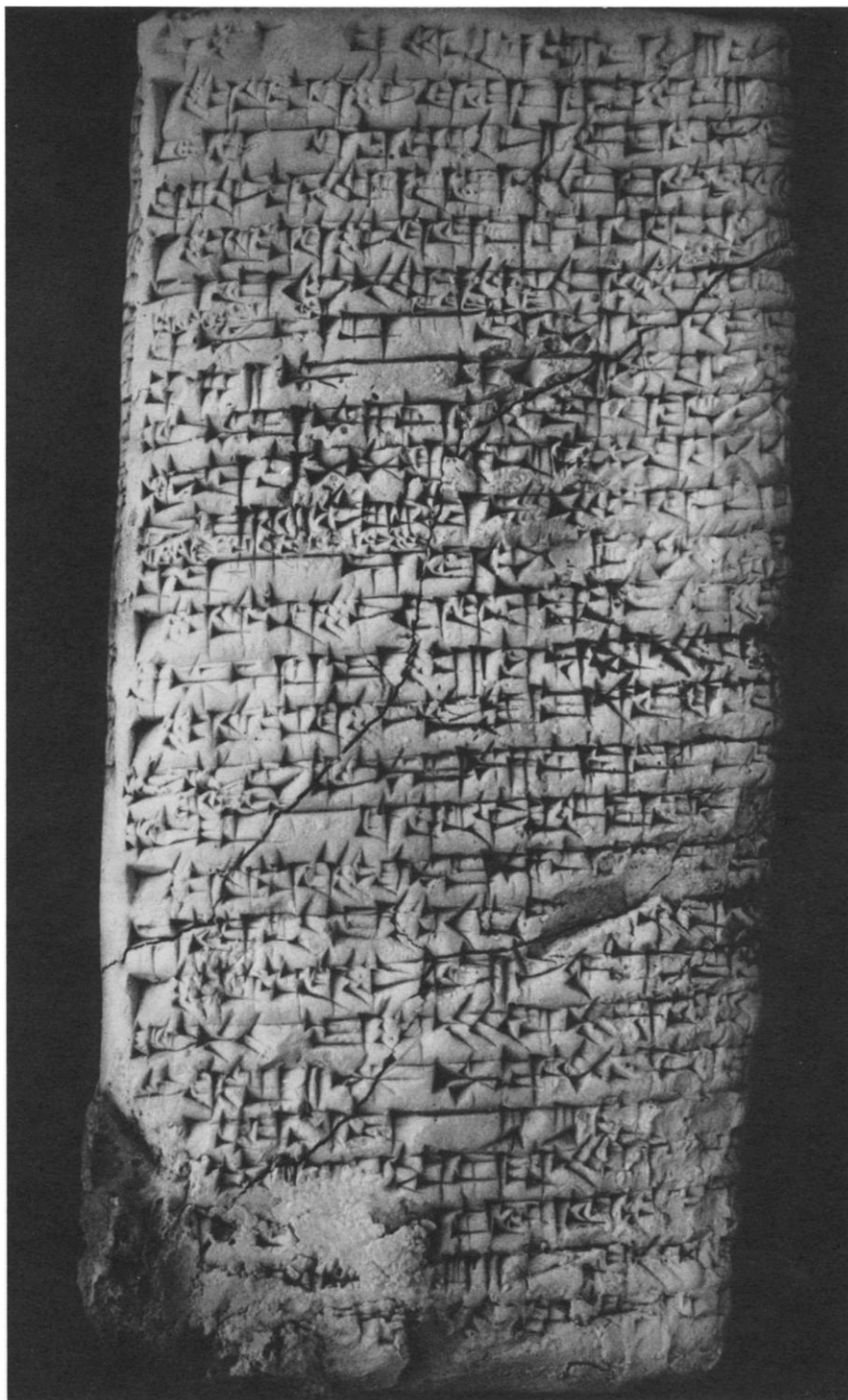


Plate 2a. 3N T296 obverse.

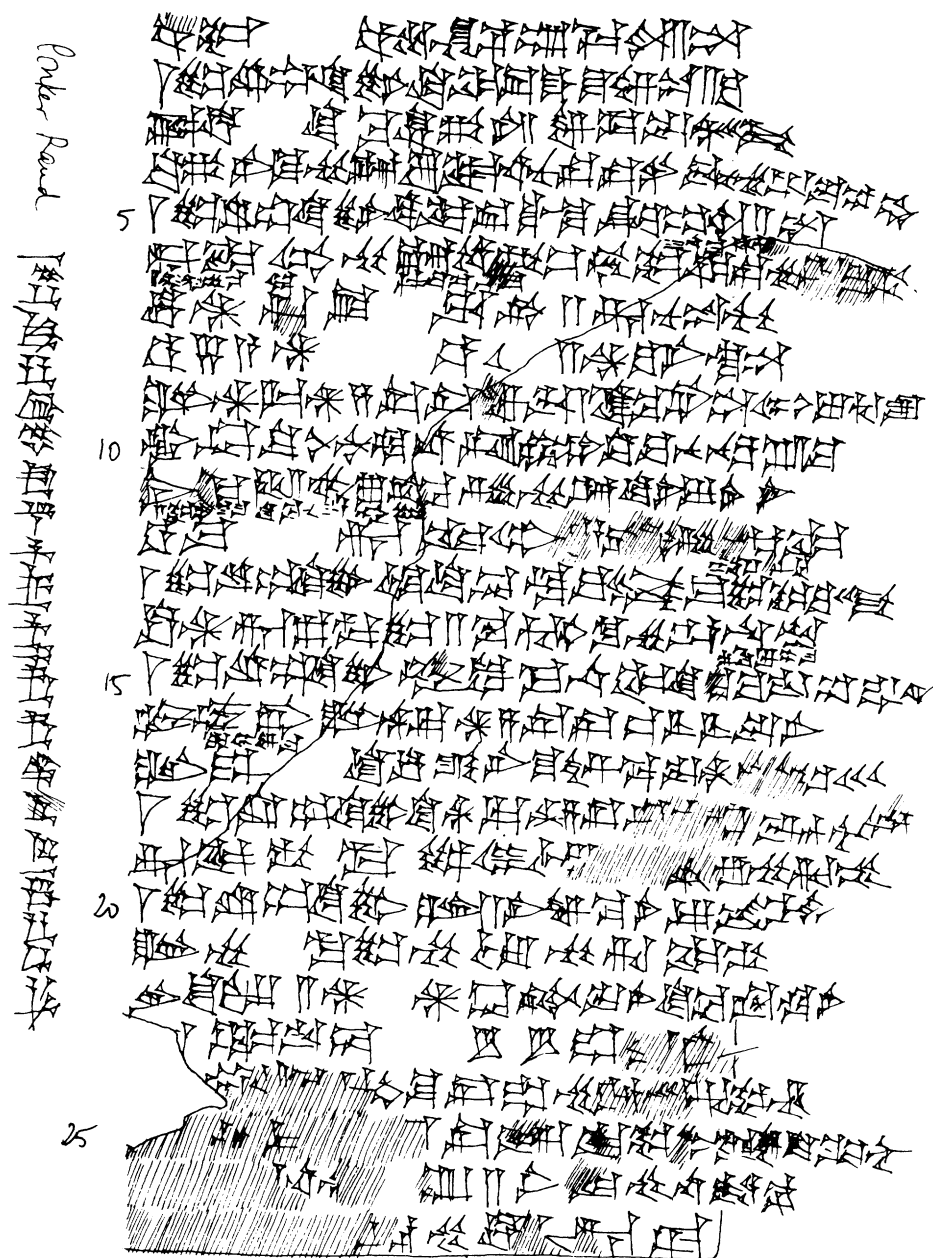


Plate 2b. 3N T296 obverse.

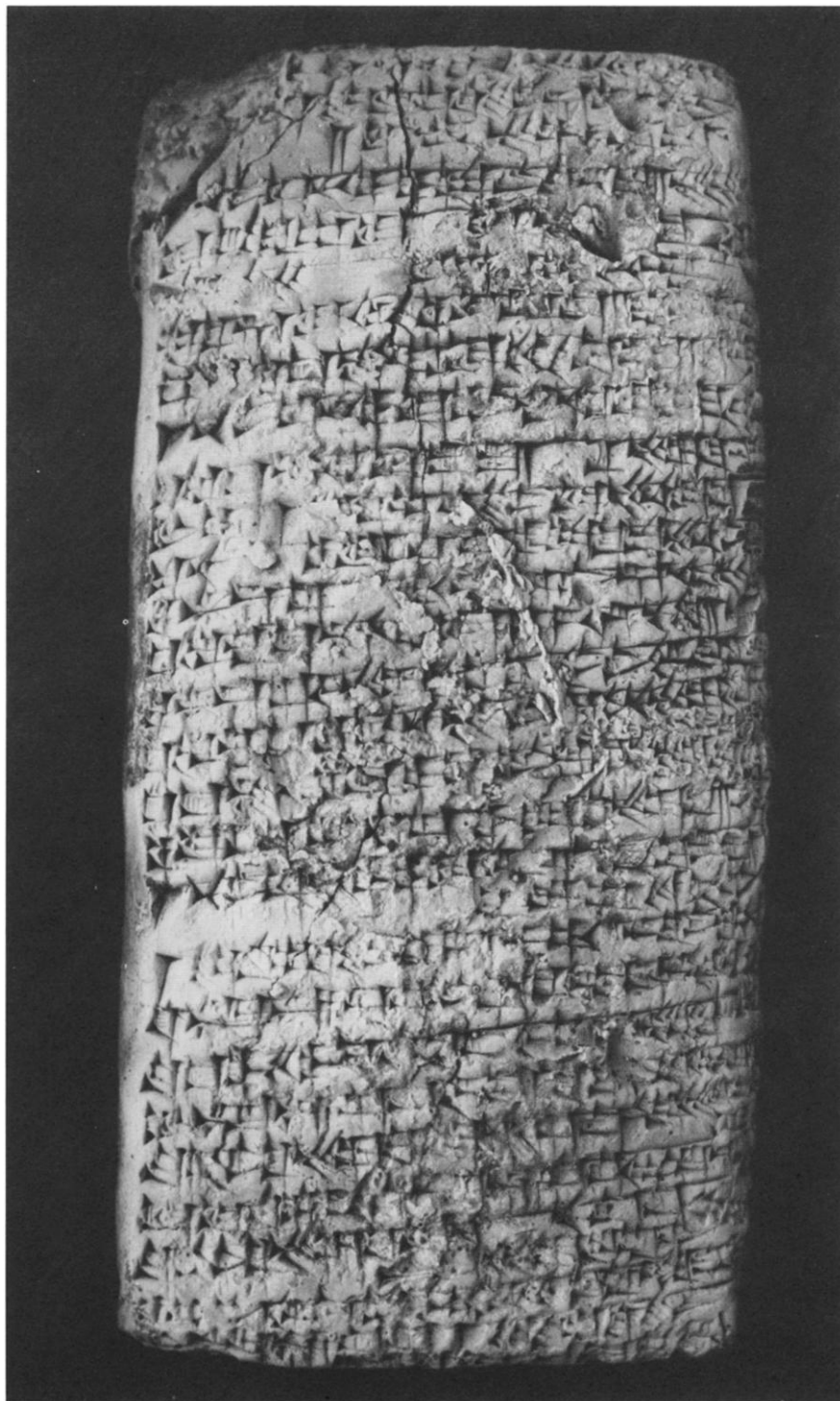


Plate 3a. 3N T296 reverse.

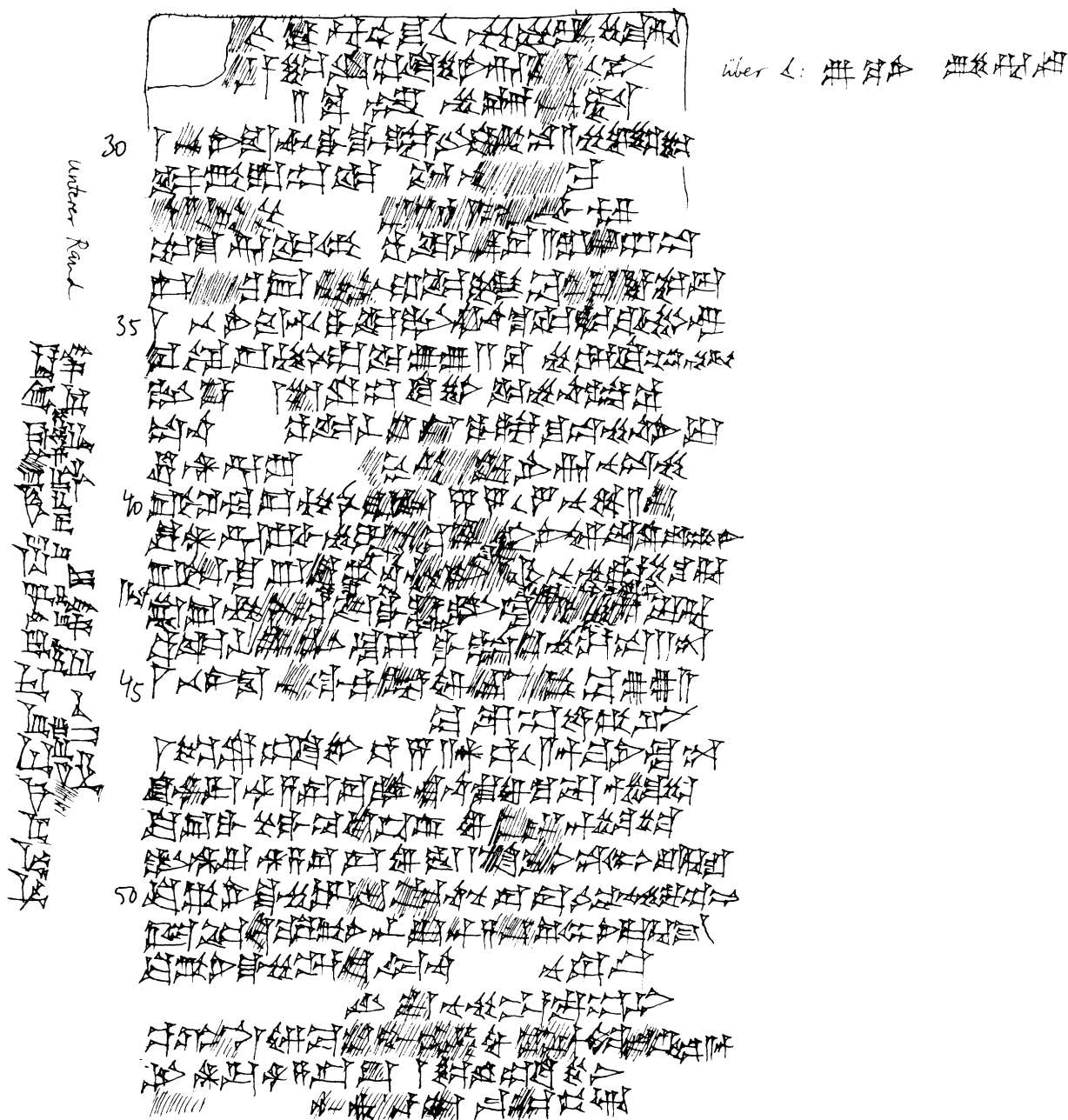


Plate 3b. 3N T296 reverse.

and Kish (this text), Agade (Curse of Agade) and the Third Dynasty of Ur (Ur Laments).

TRANSLITERATION AND TRANSLATION. The transliteration of *TRS* 73 is based on Cooper's collation of the tablet.¹⁰ The transliteration of 3N T296 is based on Cooper's study of the cast, the copies and transliterations of Civil and Heimpel, and final careful collation of the cast by Cooper.¹¹ The many lexical and grammatical difficulties of the text, and problems in reconstructing the narrative, will be discussed in the Commentary.

TRS 73 obv.

1' èš má-^rgur₈-gi^l[m]
2' gir₄ maḥ-bi x[]
3' íd-bi a ḥúl-la da-[rí]
4' a-gàr-bi gi^sal-e ri-e-dè ^rgán^l[]
5' é ki^s_i-a uru lil-la-gim maš-gán gi₄-[gi₄-dè]
6' lugal-bi sipa ur-^dza-^rba₄-b^l[a₄]
7' é ki^s_i-a-ka ^dutu-gim àm-è
8' nam-lugal-la-na bal-bi šu kúr-ru-dè é-gal-l[a] LAM-bi sud₄-rá-x[(x)]
9' an ^den-líl inim kù-ga-ne-ne-a zi-dè-eš x[x x]
10' ki u₄-bi šar-ru-um-ki-in uru-ni ur[u]
11' ad-da-ni la-i-bu-um ama-n[i]
12' šar-ru-um-ki-in šà du₁₀-ga mu-[]
13' mu im-ta-tu-ud-da-aš x[]

obv.

¹¹ Thanks to Å. Sjöberg of the Babylonian Section, University Museum, Philadelphia, for making the cast available for study. The photographs of the tablet, made from field negatives in the files of the Oriental Institute, were obtained too late for use in preparing this article.

¹⁰ I would like to thank Mme. B. Leicknam of the Musée du Louvre for making the collation possible, and for excellent photographs of the tablet.

- 7 kù ^dinana-ke₄ da-bi-a mùš nu-túm-mu
8 u₄ 5-àm u₄ 10-àm ba-zal-la-ta
9 lugal ^dur-^dza-ba₄-ba₄ im-da-lá ki-tuš-bi-ta mi-ni-ib-ḥu-luḥ
10 pirig-gim šà pap-ḥal-la-na kàš biz¹(or biz¹-biz)-biz šà-ba úš lugud si.A-ba
11 i-^rkúš¹ ku₆ a mun lu-ga-gim zi mu-un-di-ni-ib-ir-ir
a-ne-eḥ-ma šu ki-ma nu-un as-li
12 u₄-ba MÙŠ.KA.UL (eras.) é¹² ^dezinu-ka
i-na x x (x)
13 ^mšar-ru-um-ki-in ù-sá-gim la-ba-nú ma-mú-dè ba-nú
14 kù ^dinana-ke₄ ma-mú id mud-šè mu-un-gir₅-gir₅
ú-te₄-eb-bi-šu
15 ^mšar-ru-um-ki-in dum-dam-ma-na KA ki-^ršè¹ ba-da-ab-ra-^rah¹
16 dum-dum-bi lugal ^dur-^dza-ba₄-ba₄ giš-tuk-tuk-da-ni
ra-mi-im-šu
17 lugal-ra ki kù-ga-ni-šè im-ma-da-an-^rsun₅¹-ne-eš
18 ^mšar-ru-um-ki-in ki ^dur-^dza-ba₄-b^ra₄-šè im-ma¹-da-an-sun₅-ne
19 MÙŠ.KA.UL¹(GA) ma-mú gi₆-ù-[(na x) n]a ^rù¹-mu-re-du₈
20 ^mšar-ru-um-ki-in lugal-a-ni im-ma-ni-ib-gi₄-gi₄
21 lugal-mu ma-mú-mu ù-mu-re-du₁₁-ga
22 lú ki-sikil diš-àm an-gim sukud-da-ni ki-gim dagal-la-ni
23 [sub]u^š? bàd-da-gim gar-gar-ra (eras.?)
24 [id] ^rmaḥ id mu¹d-šè gá-ra mu-un-^rgir₅¹-re-dè-en
25 [(x)] ^rx¹ [^d]u[r-^dza-b]a₄-ba₄ nundum KA bí-in-^rkú¹ ní šà-^ršè¹ ba-gíd
26 [x x]x na A[N x] sukkal-a-ni ^rgù¹ mu-na-dé-e
27 [n]^rin₉-e¹-mu kù ^dinana-ke₄
rev. *ú-ba-ni ú-še-ri-ib*
28 [x x]x x mud-šè u-mu mu-un-ku₄-re
29 [x]x ^mšar-ru-um-ki-in MÙŠ.KA.UL id maḥ mu-un-gir₅-gir₅
30 ^mbe-lí-iš-ti-kál gal-simug lú šà-ga DU-a-mu im sar-sar
31 inim ga-ra-ab-du₁₁ ^rinim-mu¹ [ḥé]-dab₅
32 ^rna-ri-ga¹-mu ^rgizzal hé-em¹-ši-ak
33 ne-éš MÙŠ.KA.UL zabar-^ršú¹ - gá a-ra - ^rx¹-ab-túm
34 é-[sikil-]ja é ^rnam¹-tar-ra-ka alan-gim ^rkùš-kùš-a¹ si-bí-ib
35 ^mbe-lí-iš-ti-kál inim lugal-la-na-šè sag-kéš ba-ši-in-ak
36 é-sikil é nam-tar-ra-ka kùš-kùš-a si mu-un-sá *uš-ta-sí-iq*
37 lugal-e ^mšar-ru-um-ki-in gù mu-na-dé-e
38 gin-na zabar-^ršú¹-gá gal-simug-šè¹ túm-mu-na-ni-ib
38a ^mšar-ru-um-ki-in é-gal ^dur-^dza-ba₄-ba₄ im-ma-da-ra-ab-è (from edge)
39 kù ^dinana-ke₄ ^rzà zi-da-¹ni mùš nu-túm-mu
40 é-sikil-la é nam-tar-ra-ka 5 nindan 10 nindan nu-te-a-^rna¹
41 kù ^dinana-ke₄ igi mu-u^rn-na¹-nigin gir-ni im-da-ru
ú x x (x) ru
42 é-sikil -la é kù-ga na-nam lú mud nu-mu-un-ku₄-re
a-na [(?)] mu (x)²el x ^rša¹da-mi^rú-ul¹ i -ru-ub
43 ká é nam-tar-ra-ka gal-^rsimug¹ lugal-la-{ke₄ gaba¹ mu-un-da-ri
šu bi/ub x x (x)
44 zabar-^ršú lugal¹-la-ke₄ gal-simug-^ršè¹ mu-un-DU-a-ta
45 ^mbe-lí-iš-^rti¹-kál gal-simug im-^rda¹-lá alan-gim kùš-kùš-a ba¹-da-ab-si-ga-bi
46 ^mšar-ru-um-ki-in u₄ 5-àm u₄ 10-àm ba-zal-la-ta

¹² Heimpel reads é-DIN (with Civil).

- 47 ki^dur-^dza-ba₄-ba₄ lugal-la-na-šè im-ma-da-an-ku₄-ku₄
 48 šà é-gal kur gal-gim 'ki-ús^l-sa im-^rma-da^l-an-ku₄-ku₄
 49 lugal^dur-^dza-ba₄-ba₄ im-da-lá ki-tuš-^rbi^l-ta mi-ni-ib-^hu-lu^h
 50 šà-ga-ni-šè mu-un-zu eme-na nu-gá-gá lú-da nu-mu-un-da-ab-bé
 51 itima-ka ki-tuš kù-ga-ni^dur-^dza-^rba^l₄-ba₄mi-ni-ib-^hu-lu^h
 52 šà-ga-ni-šè mu-un-zu eme-na nu-gá-gá lú-da nu-mu-un-da-ab-bé
 53 u₄-bi-ta im-ma 'gub-bu ^hé-gál^l im 'si-si^l-ge ba-ra-gál-la-àm
 54 lugal^dur-^dza-ba₄-ba₄ ^mšar-ru-um-ki-in 'dingir-re-e^l-ne šu-du₁₁-ga-ar
 55 im-ma gub-bu níg ní ba-ug₇-a-ta
 tu-up-pa iš-tù-ur-šu ša šu-mu-ut ra-ma-ni (-[šu]?)
 56 unu^{ki}-ga lugal-zà-ge₄-e-si šu ba-ni-ib-tag₄-tag₄

TRS 73 rev.

- 1 dam^l lugal-zà-ge₄-si-^rda im^l-[]
 2 nam-munus an-dùl-šè mu-ni-ba x[]
 3 lugal-zà-ge₄-si kin-gi₄-a nu-[]
 4 gá-nam-ma sig₄^l é-an-na-šè gír mu-un-g[ub]
 5 lugal-zà-ge₄-si šà-ga-ni nu-un-z[u] ugu kin-gi₄-a nu-mu-un-du₁₁-du₁₁
 6 en-na ugu kin-gi₄-a na-mu-un-du₁₁-du₁₁ igi dumu nun ba-an-da-bad
 7 en-e u₈ bí-in-du₁₁ saḥar-ra ba-an-da-tuš
 8 lugal-zà-ge₄-si kin-gi₄-a-ar im-ši-in-gi₄
 9 kin-gi₄-a šar-ru-ki-in gú nu-mu-un-^rsi^l-s[i]
 10 gam-gam-ma-ni šar-ru-ki-in 'lugal^l-z[à[?]-ge₄[?]-si[?]]
 11 šar-ru-ki-in lugal-z[à-ge₄-si]
 12 a-na-aš-àm š[ar-ru-ki-in]
 13 (traces only)

TRANSLATION

TRS 73 obv.

- 1' The sanctuary, [like] a cargo-ship [],
 2' Its great furnace [].
 3' [So that] its canals would fore[ver flow with]
 waters of joy,
 4' So that the hoe would be wielded in its agricul-
 tural tracts, the fields [].
 5' So that the house of Kish, (which had been) like
 a ghost town, would be turned back into a
 settlement,
 6' Its king, the shepherd Urzababa,
 7' Rose like the sun over the house of Kish.
 9' (But) An and Enlil, by their holy command,
 authoritatively [ordered]
 8' That his royal reign be alienated, that the pal-
 ace's *prosperity* be removed.
 10' At that time, Sargon—his city was the city
 [].
 11' His father was La^bibum, his mother []—
 12' Sargon, happily [].
 13' Because he was so born []

3N T296

- 1 One day, after evening had arrived,
 2 Sargon, when the offerings had been brought to
 the palace—
 3 He (Urzababa) having lain down in the holy
 bed-chamber, his holy residence,
 4 He understood, but would not articulate it, nor
 speak about it with anyone—
 5 Sargon, having received the offerings for the
 palace—
 6 *He (Urzababa) had made the cupbearer respon-*
 sible (for the offerings)—he (Sargon) took
 charge of the drinking chest.
 7 Holy Inana was unceasingly working *behind the*
 scenes.
 8 After five or ten days had passed,
 9 King Urzababa . . . , he was frightened in that
 residence,
 10 Like a lion, he was dribbling urine, filled with
 blood and pus, down his legs,
 11 He struggled like a floundering salt-water fish,
 he was terrified there.

- 12 At that time, the *cupbearer*, in the *temple* of
Ezinu,
13 Sargon, lay down not to sleep, but lay down to
dream.
14 Holy Inana, in the dream, was drowning him
(Urzababa) in a river of blood.
15 Sargon, screaming, gnawed the ground.
16 When king Urzababa heard those screams,
17 He had them bring him (Sargon) into the king's
presence.
18 Sargon came into the presence of Urzababa,
(who said:)
19 "Oh *cupbearer*, was a dream revealed to you in
the night?"
20 Sargon replied to his king:
21 "Oh my king, this is my dream which I will have
told you about:
22 "There was a single young woman, she was high
as the heavens, she was broad as the earth,
23 "She was firmly set as the [*bas*]e of a wall.
24 "For me, she drowned you in a great [river], a
river of blood."

25 [] U[rzab]aba chewed his lips, became seri-
ously afraid,
26 He spoke to [. . .] his chancellor:
27 "[] my royal sister, holy Inana,
28 "[] is going to put my finger into a . . . of
blood,
29 "[*The*]n she will drown Sargon, the *cupbearer*,
in a great river.
30 "Belištikal, master smith, man of my choosing,
who can write tablets,
31 "I will give you orders, let my orders be carried
out!
32 "Let my instructions be heeded!
33 "Now then, when the *cupbearer* has delivered
my *bronze cups* to you,
34 "In the Esikil/pure temple, the temple of desti-
nies, *cast them in moulds* as if for figurines!"

35 Belišṭikal paid attention to his king's orders,
and
36 He readied *moulds* in the Esikil/pure temple,
the temple of destinies.
37 The king spoke to Sargon:
38 "Go and deliver my *bronze cups* to the master
smith!"

38a Sargon left the palace of Urzababa,
39 Holy Inana was unceasingly 'at his right side'.

40 When he had not come within five or ten *nindan*
of the Esikil/pure temple, the temple of
destinies,
41 Holy Inana turned around toward him and
blocked his way, (saying:)
42 "Is not the Esikil/pure temple a holy temple?
No one (polluted) with blood should enter
it!"
43 At the gate of the temple of destinies, he
(Sargon) met the master smith of the king.
44 After he delivered the king's *bronze cups* to the
master smith—
45 Belišṭikal, the master smith, . . . , having *cast*
them in moulds as if for figurines—
46 Sargon, after five or ten days had passed,
47 Came into the presence of Urzababa, his king,
48 Came right into the palace, firmly founded as a
great mountain.
49 King Urzababa . . . , he was frightened in that
residence,
50 He understood, but would not articulate it, nor
speak about it with anyone,
51 In the bed-chamber, his holy residence, Urza-
baba was frightened,
52 He understood, but would not articulate it, nor
speak about it with anyone.

53 In those days, writing on tablets certainly
existed, but enveloping tablets did not exist;
54 King Urzababa, for Sargon, creature of the
gods,
55 Wrote a tablet, which would cause his own
death, and
56 He dispatched it to Lagulzagesi in Uruk.

TRS 73 rev.
1 With the wife of Lugulzagesi . . . [],
2 She . . . [] her femininity as a shield [],
3 Lugulzagesi would not [*reply*] to the envoy,
(and said:)
4 "Come now! Would he step within Eana's
masonry?"
5 Lugulzagesi did not understand, so he did not
talk to the envoy,
6 (But) as soon as he did talk to the envoy, the
eyes of the prince's son were opened.
7 The lord said "Alas!" and sat in the dirt,
8 Lugulzagesi replied to the envoy:
9 "Oh envoy, Sargon does not *yi[eld]*,
10 "When he submits, Sargon [] *Lugalz[agesi]*,
11 "Sargon [] *Lugalz[agesi]*,
12 "Why does S[argon] []?"

ALTERNATIVE TRANSLATION FOR 3N T296 (HEIMPEL)

- When on that day evening had come,
and when Sargon had brought the meal for the
palace,
he (Urzababa) was lying down in the pure cham-
ber, his pure dwelling.
He 'knew it to his heart,' did not set it on the
tongue, spoke with nobody.
- 5 When Sargon had received the meal for the
palace,
and when he had put on the MÜŠ.KA.UL, he took
hold of the tray.
Pure Inana did not move from his sides.
5 days, 10 days went by.
King Urzababa withdrew. He was frightened 'of
that dwelling.'
- 10 'Like a lion' sprinkling the inside of his legs
with urine in which there was plenty of fresh
blood
he moaned and gasped like a struggling salt-
water fish.
On one of these days, the MÜŠ.KA.UL, Sargon,
lay down in the winehouse of Ashnan—
not that he wanted to sleep, he lay down for a
dream.
In the dream, pure Inana 'submerged' into a
blood river.
- 15 Sargon shouted "hither" in his agitation.
As Urzababa heard that agitation
they came hurrying before the king to his pure
place.
Also Sargon came hurrying to Urzababa's place.
"MÜŠ.KA.UL!, . . ."
- 20 Sargon turned to his king:
"My king, in my dream which I am telling you
now
there was a person, one young woman. She was
high like heaven. She was broad like earth.
She was set like the foundation of a wall.
She submerged you for me into a mighty river,
a river of blood."
- 25 . . . Urzababa bit his lip. 'Fear reached to the
heart.'
To . . . , his vizier, he said:
". . . , my noble sister, pure Inana
into . . . blood she 'entered' my finger.
. . . Sargon, the MÜŠ.KA.UL, she submerged in a
mighty river."
- 30 "Belishtikal, chief smith who writes down my
wishes,

- let me tell you, heed my word,
pay attention to my counsel.
Now, when the MÜŠ.KA.UL has brought to you
the bronze of my hand,
Pour it into the ingot mould like a statue in the
Esikil, the house of fate."
- 35 Belishtikal obeyed the word of his king.
He prepared the ingot mould in the Esikil, the
Esikil, the house of fate.
The king said to Sargon:
"Go, bring the bronze of my hand to the chief
smith."
Pure Inana did not move from his right side.
- 40 He had not come to within 5, 10 Nindan of the
Esikil, the house of fate,
when pure Inana . . . , blocked his path.
"Is not the Esikil a pure house? A blood
(stained) person does not enter it!"
He met the chief smith of the king at the gate of
the house of fate.
When he had handed the bronze of the hand of
the king to the chief smith,
- 45 Belishtikal, the chief smith, withdrew and
poured it like a statue into the ingot mould.
etc.
53ff. [I cannot give a running translation.]

PHILOLOGICAL COMMENTARY

TRS 73 obv.

1'ff. For the similarities between this text and the first
section of the Curse of Agade, see Cooper, *The Curse of
Agade*, chapter 3.

6'f. Cf. Curse of Agade, 40f. lugal-bi sipa ^dna-ra-am-
^dsin bara₂ kù a-ga-dè ^ki-šè u₄-dè-éš im-è. "Its shepherd,
Naramsin, rose like the sun upon the holy throne of Agade."

8'. LAM = *ešēbu*?

10'f. Cf. lines 2–4 of the Akkadian Sargon Legend:¹³

ummi ēnetu abi ul īdi
aḫi abīja irammi šadā
ālī Azupirāni ša ina aḫi Puratti šaknu

My mother was an *ēntu*-priestess, my father I did not
know,

My uncle inhabits the mountains,

My city (of birth) was Azupirānu, which lies on the
bank of Euphrates.

¹³ Lewis, *The Sargon Legend*, 24f.

3N T296

1. The same line occurs in Hendursaga (*AOAT* 25, 148) 77 and Marriage of Martu (*SRT* 8), i 19, 34. Cf. Shaffer *Sumerian Sources*, 68:158, and S. Cohen, *Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta*, 1. 98 with commentary.

2. Our text exhibits a clear predilection for subordinating clauses with nominalization and following ablative case marker (cf. lines 1, 5, 8, 44, 46, 55). The meaning of this subordination is in all cases temporal. Temporal subordination in the form of -a-ba occurs only in line 2 where it is obviously chosen in order to avoid repetition of -a-ta (cf. 1. 44).

3. The intrusive nature of these lines is especially awkward, but the subject must be Urzababa, for it is he who sleeps in the itima kù (1.51) and has the awful premonitions of his own downfall (4 = 50 = 52). Similar premonitions of Naramsin are expressed in the same words in the Curse of Agade, 87 and 93a. Note the play on this line in *TRS* 73 rev. 5.

6. MÙŠ.KA.UL occurs in no other text, but the gloss SILÀ.ŠU.DU₈ “cupbearer” (what is the x GUL which follows it?) immediately identifies Sargon’s function at Urzababa’s court according to the literary-historical tradition (see above). Heimpel understands MÙŠ.KA.UL as the direct object of m u - u n - s i - g a, and speculates that the MÙŠ is the emblem MÙŠ worn by kings and en’s, and Sargon is wearing some such emblem in his function as cupbearer, and that, by extension, the wearer of the emblem (here Sargon) was called by the emblem’s name (cf. Muškešda³ana, the en of Aratta).

Civil has contributed the following note on ^{giš}g ú - n e - s a g - g á (see already *JNES* 31, 386): “The meaning ‘cupboard,’ or ‘chest to keep the drinking utensils’ for g ú - n e - s a g - g á (the reading of the second sign is not completely certain and perhaps it would have been wise to transliterate g ú - n e -) is based on the following evidence:

1) The curse formula in *UET* 1 15:3ff. (a fragment of an obsidian cup) reads: t u k u m - b [i] g ú - n e - s a g - [g á - t a] í b ¹ - t a [a n - z i - z i] é - n í g - g a - [r a - (n i) i - í b - k u ₄ ...] ‘if he takes (this cup on which the text is inscribed) out of the g. and takes it into (his) storehouse.’

2) The g. is associated with drinking: (beer) g ú - n e - s a g - g á - k a a - g i n ₇ h é - n i - b a l - b a l *ISD* A 162; g ú - n e - s a g - g á m u ⁷ m e - t e - a š [h] é - i m - m i - i b - g á l *L* 2:23 in the context of a drinking party (see the remarks in *JNES* 31, 386); during the hot summer people ^{giš}g ú - n e - s a g - g á - k e ₄ m u - u n - k i n - k i n è n - t a r m u - n i - g á l ‘they look constantly for the g. and take good care of it’ *EE* 245; *GG* 68 mentions the g. after the banšur ‘table’; two ^{giš}g ú - n e - s a g - g á are mentioned in an inventory among furniture and utensils, Pinches Berens, 89 ii 18; 1 ^{giš}g ú - n e - s a g - g á k a š (?) g i n e s í r - é - a - b i 4 s i l a *BIN* 9 451:6f.

3) The g. of some gods are mentioned in Ur III texts and normally it is drinking and cooking utensils that go into them: cups (gal) for the g. of Nanna *UET* 3 376; 1 dára a nag-nag and one níg-i-dé-a ‘oil cruet(?)’ in the shape of a reclining calf encrusted with lapis lazuli and gold for the same destination in *UET* 3 378 and 101, respectively; copper kettles for the g. of Alamuš(LÀL) *UET* 3 378; other mentions of the g., e.g., 6N-T362, do not specify the destination. A Pre-Sargonic possible mention of the g. remains doubtful: 1 GAR-ne-sag-gá^{urudu} kuššagan-bi 1-am₆ *VAT* 4856 in *Or* 16 39 (transliteration only).

4) The man in charge of the g., (lú) g ú - n e - s a g - g á - (a k), is often mentioned in administrative texts: *BM* 12245:1 (*CT* 10 49); *H* 6246 (*MCS* 1 22); Nies *UDT* 59:54; *BM* 21399:12 (*CT* 9 37); note that among the personnel (gír-si-ga) of the libation place ki-a-nag en-en-e-ne-ka in *RTC* 4 1 ii 5 there is at least one lú-gú-ne-sag-gá mentioned between the doorman and the brewer, confirming once more the association of the g. with drinking.”

While the g. usually contained drinking utensils, the presents given to the g. of Nanna by the king and queen seem to be a different kind of object. *UET* 3 101:1f (1 ninda-i-dé-a / amar-nú-a na -za-gin guškin gar-ra) is probably “1 pastry ninda-i-dé-a (“bread with oil poured over it”) with a gold set lapislazuli figure of a reclining calf.” The latter may be the ornament of the former. Also the other presents, the gold set lapis-lazuli ^{giš}ku (*UET* 3 378:1), the “small ku of red gold” (*UET* 3 376:4), and the “drinking ibex” (*UET* 3 378) may be ornaments. *UET* 3 741 mentions the g. of a šabra together with bronze vessels and utensils which are also attested in connection with cupbearers (see below to 33ff.).

7. Cooper translates da as *puzru* (Proto-Izi II 104 [*MSL* 13 44]); Heimpel follows 1. 39.

Inana was the chief goddess of Kish, as she would be of Agade (as she was also of Lugalzagesi’s Uruk), and thus on one level was the wife of the current king, Urzababa. The activity of Inana here on Sargon’s behalf means that she is preparing to change royal husbands in accord with the decision of An and Enlil in *TRS* 73 obv. Her disengagement from Urzababa is one of the foreboding indications of his reign’s approaching end. A similar process can be observed in the Lugalbanda Epic. Enmerkar sees in the misfortune in which he finds himself before the walls of Aratta a sign that Inana has abandoned Him:

Now and here my *hili* has ended. . . . Like a child who, hating his mother, leaves the city, has my noble sister, pure Inana, run away from me to the brickwork Kulaba. . . . Would I (now) enter the brickwork Kulaba, my lance would be taken from me then, my

shield would be broken by her then. (Wilcke, *Lugalbanda*, 306–320)

Thanks to his powers gained from Anzu, Lugalbanda makes the trip from Aratta to Uruk at the speed of thought, and is well received by Inana:

As she looked at the shepherd Ama²ushumgalana, she looked at pure Lugalbanda. As she spoke to her son, the lord Shara, did she speak to pure Lugalbanda. (Wilcke, *Lugalbanda*, 350–353)

Inana has shifted her loyalties from the reigning king, whose powers are on the wane, to the eventual successor who has impressed her as fit to be king.

8. Cf. 1. 46.

9 = 49. For im-da-lá, note Gragg, *AOATS* 5 65. In the *Lamentation over Sumer and Ur* 58, An frightens Sumer in its residence (an-né ke-en-gi ki-tuš-ba bí-in-ḥu-luḥ).

10. The verb after kàš might also be su_x (TAG)-bé (So Civil); cf. *MSL* 14 413:221 su-bu TAG = *ša-ta*[-x], probably to be restored *šatānu*, “to urinate.” For úš lugud, cf. *MSL* 12 185:52 (OB Lu B) lú šà úš lugud dé-dé = *ša libbašu dama u šarka malû*. Whereas this refers to the presence of blood and pus in the man’s insides, šà in our line must be prepositional and refer to blood and pus in the urine (unless -ba is an error for -ga-na).

11. See Heimpel, *Tierbilder*, 79.2; for the gloss, cf. *eslu* “bloated.”

12. Heimpel, with Civil, reads é-DIN ^dezinu-ka.

13. For this dream introduction, see *SGL* 1 75f.; Civil, *AOAT* 25, 92.

14f. Because Sargon, in line 24, tells Urzababa that “For me, she drowned you,” the person being drowned in line 14 must be Urzababa, not Sargon. Sargon’s frightened reaction in line 15 is not caused by fear for his own life, but by the realization of his master’s downfall and his own ascendance, and the risks this will entail.¹⁴

15. Cooper understands zú-ra-aḥ “to gnaw, chew”; Heimpel gù-ra-aḥ “to scream.”

19. The ù- prefix here is problematic.

22f. Whereas the initial version of the dream in l. 14 identifies the protagonist as Inana, Sargon’s retelling is both more poetic and more oblique, echoing the appearance of Ningirsu in Gudea Cyl. A iv 14ff.:

šà ma-mú-da-ka lú diš-àm an-gim ri-ba-ni
ki-gim ri-ba-ni
a-ne sag-gá-ni-šè dingir-ra-àm

á-ni-šè anzu ^{mušen}-dam
sig-ba-ni-a-šè a-ma-ru-kam

In the dream there was a single man, huge as heaven,
Huge as the earth,

He, by his head was a god,

By his wings, the Anzu-eagle,

By his lower body, the Deluge.

24. The ambiguity of the direct object is resolved here only by gá-ra “for me,” since the accusative pronominal suffix -en translated “you” can also be translated “me,” just as the accusative infix /n/ in l. 14 could theoretically refer either to Sargon or Urzababa.

25. The traces at the beginning seem to exclude [luga]l. For nundun-kú, see *CAD* s.v. *našāku*. For ní šà-šè ba-gíd, cf. *OECT* 5 28f.:2 lugal-mu ní nu-te ní nu-gíd-i “My king need not fear or worry,” and *TIM* 9 6:14f. = 32ff.:

e-ne ma-an-du₁₁ šà-šè nu-gíd
gá-e in-na-an-du₁₁-du₁₁ ba-kés šà-šè ba-gíd
šī iqbiamma ana libhim ula ašdud
anāku aqbīšimma iktāsar
ana libhim ištadaḍ

She spoke to me, but I didn’t take it seriously;

I spoke to her, and she *paid attention* and took it seriously.

28f. Despite Urzababa’s premonition of his downfall in l. 4 and his frightened reaction to Sargon’s dream in l. 25, which shows that he well understood the dream’s meaning, he publicly reinterprets the dream here to bode well for him and ill for Sargon. This intentional flouting of divine will is similar to Naramsin’s reaction in the *Curse of Agade* to the god’s decision to bring *his* dynasty to end. But whereas Naramsin’s efforts to resist were directed against the source of the decision, Enlil’s temple Ekur in Nippur, Urzababa’s efforts will be directed here against the agent of the gods, Sargon. In his dream interpretation, Urzababa does not just switch victim and beneficiary, but rather splits the action of Inana in two: she will dip Urzababa’s finger into blood, and will drown Sargon in a great river. The íd maḥ íd mud of l. 24 are separated, and another verbal clause is created, using ku₄(-r) possibly because of its partial homonymy and synonymy with the original verb gir₅.

30. Bēliš-tikal, “trust in the lord,” uses the post-Old Akkadian imperative form. Cf. šarriš-takal on a seal of Naramsin’s reign (*Afo* 22 16 No. 10) with the name šulgiš-tikal in Ur III (*MAD* 3 295).

31f. For the instructional formula, see Alster, *Studies in Sumerian Proverbs*, 29ff.

33ff. The activity to be performed by the smith is the least intelligible part of the composition. Is this a kind of Nam-

¹⁴ See Cooper in the *Iwry Festschrift* (forthcoming).

burbi to counteract the message of the dream, or a trap being laid for Sargon? Since, at the end of the activity, Urzababa is rather shocked to see Sargon again (1.49), it must be a trap, but what kind? The *zabar-šu* which the cupbearer Sargon is to bring to the smith is probably a cup of some sort. The element *zabar* in this word does not necessarily mean the material bronze. According to Bauer, *AWL* 182 xi 11 the *zabar-šu* could be made of "pure silver." In *OIP* 14 103 on the other hand, 3 *zabar-šu* are contained in 32 *zabar-ḫi-a*. The conflicting indications can be harmonized by assuming that the object was originally and typically made of bronze, yet it acquired a ceremonial or ornamental use in which it could also be made of more precious materials. Our text demonstrates that the word contains a genitive. According to *OIP* 14 103, the *zabar-šu* belonged to a set of bronze utensils which were given to a certain *Me-ša-kan*. The latter is a cupbearer according to *OIP* 14 100. His set in 103 includes 7 different kinds of objects. Only three are vaguely identifiable, i.e. *ma-ša-lum* as "mirror" or "palette" (so *CAD* s.v. *mušālu* A; but possibly to be connected with *mušālu* B "esophagus" and explained as drinking tube); *za-ḫum* as a container of liquids (*AHW* "Schale"; Limet, *TMP* "aiguïère" following Deimel *ŠL* "Kanne"); *gal-ka-šu* as a variety of container of liquids (Salonen *HAM* 1 s.v.; Heimpel, *ZDMG* 120 [1970], 186). A similar set is characterized as *šu silā.šu.du* in *BIN* 8 145, another (*UET* 3 741) is related to the *gú-ne-sag-gá* of a *šabra*. Comparable is also *MVN* 3 152 which details gifts of a governor for Anunītum, among them a copper "mirror" and a "copper of the hand" (*urudu-šu*). The word *zabar-šu* is found in prominent position in the forerunner to Hh XII (*MSL* 7 231:2) and to be expected in Gap A of the canonical version.

The association of cupbearer and the *zabar-šu* insures that our text is indeed talking about the same *zabar-šu* found in the texts just cited, despite the grammatical difficulty of *zabar-šu-gá* in lines 33 and 38. If *zabar-šu* is "bronze (vessel) of the hand," "my z." should be **zabar-šu-ak-mu* > *zabar-šu-mu*, whereas *zabar-šu-gá* means "the bronze of my hand, bronze in my possession" (**zabar-šu-mu-ak*).

kūš-kūš is translated in lexical lists by Akk. *rātu* "pipe, tube, gutter, ditch," but seems, in fact, to mean *rātu* mainly in specifically metallurgical contexts. The lexical evidence is as follows:

<i>ku-uš</i> = <i>ú</i> = <i>rātu</i> _m	Proto-Aa 231:1 (<i>MSL</i> 14 98)
(<i>urudu</i>) <i>kūš-kūš</i> =	Hh 10:383 and 11:423 (<i>MSL</i>
<i>rātu</i>	7 98 and 147)
<i>kūš-kūš</i> = <i>rāt nappāḫi</i>	Erimḫuš 2:55 and Imgidda
	Erimḫuš A r.5' (<i>CAD</i> s.v. <i>nappāḫu</i>)

ku-ku-uš = *urudu* *ú.ú* *JAOS* 65 225:65 (Diri 6)
= *rātu*

In Hh 10 and 11 it is followed by (*urudu*) *níg-sa-sa*, the furnace grate, and in Diri it is preceded by *urudu* *ama-tūn* = *agarinnu* "crucible" (or "mould"?), and followed by *qurqur erī* "coppersmith." The association with crucibles and furnace grates suggests something used in the melting and casting process, which fits well in our text, where the smith is pouring (*sì* = *šapāku*) the *zabar-šu* into *kūš-kūš* "as if for a statuette" or image of some kind. Mould fits best here and copper and bronze moulds as well as stone or clay moulds were used in antiquity for casting bronze.¹⁵ Despite the determinative *URUDU* in some references, non-metallic *kūš-kūš* are certainly intended in Hh 10 (the metal *kūš-kūš* is in Hh 11), and the *rātu* used by a *nappāḫu* in the newly published piece of Gilgamesh 5¹⁶ seems to be a crucible, and hence stone or clay.

A meaning "mould" in our composition would also fit the similar passage in the *Curse of Agade* 127f.:

a-gār maḫ a-eštub^{ku} dagal-la-gim
é-kur-ra^{urudu}gi-dim gal-gal-bi kūš-kūš-a bī-
in-sì-sì

As if for great tracts of land with wide-spreading carp ponds.

He cast large spades in moulds for the Ekur.

Naramsin is manufacturing spades to dig up the Ekur precinct, as if he were digging carp ponds. The same spade (*urudu*gi-dim) appears in the list of tools on the OB forerunner to Hh 11 immediately following *urudu*kūš-kūš-e-dīm (*MSL* 7 225:117f.), which we can tentatively translate as "mould-made (tool)." Finally, in the *Lamentation Over Sumer and Ur*, 232, we can now restore [a]n-gim kūš-kūš-a dé-a-me-eš i-[sì]-ge-dè-en-dè-en "We are spilled out like figurines being cast in moulds."

Heimpel thinks *kūš-kūš* are ingot moulds (cf. Goetze, *JAOS* 65, 235: "the furrow in front of the crucible into which the molten metal flows, in which it hardens, and from which it is taken out in the form of ingots"), which is supported by the presence of *rātu* for gold, silver and copper in an Old Babylonian list of key numbers for various standardized containers and vessels (*MCT*, 134:22ff.). If *rātu* is a standardized ingot mould, its association with the standard of capacity (in the form of a vessel) *ḫiburnu* in Frankena, *Tākultu*, 25 i 39 would also be explained. *kūš-kūš-a sì* "to pour into ingot moulds," then means, more freely, "to melt down." The *Curse of Agade* passage cited above can be

¹⁵ Tylecote, *A History of Metallurgy*, 32f.

¹⁶ Von Weiher, *Ba Mi*, 11 93:19.

translated "That which produces (dím, not -gim) the large arable tracts (lapped) widely by carp waters, (namely) the Ekur's large spades, were poured into the ingot mould (i.e. melted down)," and the *Lamentation* passage can be rendered "Like statues poured into the ingot mould, we will be killed" (restoring ug₆, not si).

What is the Esikil? It certainly cannot be the temple of that name dedicated to Ninazu/Tišpak in Ešnunna, and it is not known as a temple of Inana or a temple in Kish. Should we rather translate "pure temple?" The temple's epithet "temple of destinies" may well be connected with the activity Urzababa is ordering to be done there, in an effort to alter his destiny.

41ff. Inana's attempt to prevent Sargon from entering the temple must be in order to save him from Urzababa's trap. Why is Sargon polluted by blood? Does it refer to the dream, or to his future as a warrior? The outcome of this encounter is that Sargon delivers the bronze cups to the smith at the entrance to the temple, but does not actually enter it.

53ff. Line 53 parodies the famous passage in *Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta* 503ff.:¹⁷

en kul-aba₄^{ki}-a-ke₄ im-e šu bí-in-ra inim dub-
gim b[i-i]n-gub
u₄-bi-ta inim im-ma gub-bu nu-ub-ta-gál-la
i-ne-éš^dutu u₄-dè-a ur₅ h[é-en-na]-nam-ma-àm
en kul-aba₄^{ki}-a-ke₄ ini[m dub-gim b]i-in-gub

¹⁷ S. Cohen, *Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta*, 85f.

ur₅ h[é-en-na]-nam-ma

The *en* of Kulaba pressed some clay and wrote words on it as if on a tablet—

In those days, writing words on tablets had not existed,

But now, with the sun's rising, so it was!

The *en* of Kulaba wrote words as if on a tablet, and so it was!

The translation of im si-si-ge follows a suggestion of Civil's; cf. im-si = *imšukku*, si = *arāmu* (*CAD* svv.).

Urzababa must now be trying to anger Lugalzagesi, the overlord of southern Babylonia, against Sargon, hoping that Lugalzagesi will somehow do away with Sargon. Line 55 tells us that this plan will backfire, leading to Urzababa's own death, because, no doubt, the tablet written by Urzababa was seen by Sargon, and since tablets in those days were not sealed in envelopes he could read the message and take appropriate countermeasures.

55. For ní-ug₇, cf. Alster *Šuruppak*, l. 32 ní-zu nam-mu-ug₇-e "Do not kill yourself." But Urzababa is not actually committing suicide, only precipitating his own death through his treachery toward Sargon.

TRS 73 rev.

1. The DAM has one too many verticals.

4. The sign is LUM, as copied.

5. This line parodies lines 4,50 and 52 of 3NT 296. See the commentary to l.4 of that tablet.

9. The last sign is SUM, as copied, not GAM¹ or 'ŠUB¹. The beginning of a second SUM is visible before the break.